

REMARKS

This Amendment is submitted in response to an outstanding Office Action dated November 17, 2004, the shortened statutory period for response having expired on February 17, 2004. In filing an earlier response to the November 17, 2004 Office Action, applicants have already paid for a two month extension of time. Accordingly, a petition for a one month Extension of time and fee are included herewith. In the event that the Commissioner determines a further extension of time or fee is due, applicants hereby petition for such extension of time, and authorize the Commissioner to charge any required fee to the Milbank deposit account number 13-3250.

I. Status of the Claims

Please cancel claims 1-30 without prejudice, and add new claims 31 - 48 as indicated above. Claims 31-48 are now pending in the application. Claims 31, 37, and 43 are independent claims.

II. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1, 2, 5-12, 15, 18-22, and 25-30 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chihara et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,208,428), in view of Machine Design. The Examiner has rejected Claims 3, 4, 13, 14, 16, 17, 23 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chihara and Machine Design in view of Rager et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,363,447).

Applicant has cancelled claims 1-30 without prejudice, and respectfully submits that new claims 31 - 48 are allowable over the cited references.

III. Request for Allowance

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims of this application are in condition

for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration of the rejection and allowance is requested. If a conference would assist in placing this application in better condition for allowance, the undersigned would appreciate a telephone call at the number indicated.

Respectfully submitted,
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